

REMARKS

The Official Action mailed March 9, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully noted. This response is filed within three months of the mailing date of the Official Action and therefore is believed to be timely without extension of time. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that this response is being timely filed.

The Applicants note with appreciation the consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 1, 2001. However, the Applicants have not received acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 28, 1999. It is noted that the Image File Wrapper contains a complete copy of the IDS filed September 29, 1999, including the references cited therein. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 evidencing consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed September 28, 1999. A further Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith and consideration of this Information Disclosure Statement is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-77 were pending in the present application prior to the above amendment. Claims 1, 2, 5, 10, 11, 14, 16, 19, 20, 23, 29, 30, 33, 39, 40, 43, 49, 50, 52, 58, 59, 62, 67-69, 72 and 76 have been amended to better recite the features of the present invention and to correct minor matters of form, and new claims 78-85 have been added to recite additional protection to which the Applicants are entitled. Accordingly, claims 1-85 are now pending in the present application, of which claims 1, 10, 19, 29, 39, 49, 58 and 68 are independent. For the reasons set forth in detail below, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Paragraph 3 of the Official Action rejects claims 1-77 under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-40 of U.S. Patent No. 6,597,348 to Yamazaki et al. In response to this rejection, a *Terminal Disclaimer* is submitted herewith. Upon filing of this *Terminal Disclaimer*, the claims of the present invention are

now believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness-type double patenting rejections are requested.

New claims 78-85 have been added to recite additional protection to which the Applicants are entitled. For the reasons stated above and already of record, the Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 78-85 are in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric J. Robinson
Reg. No. 38,285

Robinson Intellectual Property Law Office, P.C.
PMB 955
21010 Southbank Street
Potomac Falls, Virginia 20165
(571) 434-6789